

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-10 PM-03 NSC-10 NSCE-00 EB-03

L-02 IO-03 PRS-01 FEA-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 CIEP-01 OMB-01 INT-01 TRSE-00 NEA-07 DODE-00

DRC-01 /074 W

----- 094599

R 071325Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6822

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BLANTYRE 186

LIMDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UK, MI

SUBJ: VISIT OF BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY

SUMMARY: BRITISH DESCRIBE FOREIGN SECRETARY'S VISIT TO MALAWI AND TALK WITH PRESIDENT BANDA AS HIGHLY SATISFACTORY. NO SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS REACHED. TWO COUNTRIES CONCUR ON RHODESIA POLICY. SIR ALEC STRESSED IMPACT ON MALAWI OF ENERGY CRISES BUT FOUND PRESIDENT UNAWARE OF POTENTIAL GRAVITY.

1. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER GAVE ME FEB 6 FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF BRITISH FONSEC VISIT TO MALAWI FEB 2-3. HIGH COMMISSIONER ASKED THAT WE LIMIT DISTRIBUTION AND NOT QUOTE HIM.

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2. FONSEC INTENDED COVER THREE GENERAL SUBJECTS IN ALL FOUR

EAST AFRICAN COUNTRIES ON CURRENT TOUR:

A. RHODESIA;

B. ENERGY CRISIS: SIR ALEC WISHED TO BRING TO FEB 11
CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF IMPACT
AND REACTIONS IN LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES;

C. COMMUNISM: SIR ALEC MAKES PRACTICE OF ASKING ON TRIPS
OF THIS NATURE OF ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES IN AREA.

3. VISIT TO MALAWI WENT SMOOTHLY AND FURTHERED SIR ALEC'S
PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH PRESIDENT BANDA AS WELL AS SENSE OF
CORDIALITY BETWEEN UK AND MALAWI. NO SPECIFIC PROPOSALS WERE
ADVANCED BY EITHER SIDE AND NO AGREEMENTS REACHED. HIGH
COMMISSIONER REGARDS VISIT AS HIGHLY SATISFACTORY. HE DESCRIBED
PRESIDENT BANDA'S LUNCHEON FOR FONSEC AS ALMOST HILARIOUSLY
FRIENDLY.

4. IN MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT BANDA AND FOREIGN SECRETARY
FEB 2 FOLLOWING MATTERS DISCUSSED:

A. RHODESIA: SIR ALEC BROUGHT PRESIDENT UP TO DATE BUT
REPORTED NO REALLY NEW DEVELOPMENTS OR PROPOSALS. PRESIDENT
HAD NO NEW SUGGESTIONS. REGARDING ABRUPT TERMINATION BISHOP
MUZOREWA'S VISIT TO MALAWI BANDA SAID HE WAS UPSET AT
IMPLICATIONS WHICH COULD BE DRAWN FROM PRESENCE OF BISHOP
AND FONSEC IN COUNTRY AT SAME TIME. THERE WAS AGREEMENT (1)
THAT VIOLENCE WOULD DO DISSERVICE TO PEOPLE OF RHODESIA,
AND (2) ON NEED FOR CONTACT AND DIALOGUE (SIR ALEC MADE
THESE TWO POINTS IN SPEECH AT STATE BANQUET). PRESIDENT BANDA
ADVISED SIR ALEC TO DISREGARD EXPECTED INSISTENCE FROM
KAUNDA AND NYERERE ON NECESSITY DEAL WITH ZANU AND ZAPU.
ACCORDING TO PRESIDENT THESE ORGANIZATIONS AMOUNT TO NOTHING.
GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES NOW OCCURRING IN RHODESIA ARE WORK
OF FRELIMO.

B. ENERGY SITUATION: SIR ALEC TOLD PRESIDENT HE HAD SEEN
PRIME MINISTER OF JAMAICA WHO TOLD HIM ENERGY CRISIS WOULD
BANKRUPT HIS COUNTRY. HE ASKED ABOUT EFFECTS ON MALAWI.
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PRESIDENT POINTED TO MEASURES ALREADY TAKEN BY MALAWI TO
CONSERVE POL AND ADMITTED SOME PERSONS WOULD BE HURT, FOR
EXAMPLE TRACTOR OPERATORS. HOWEVER, PETROLEUM CRISIS WAS
NOT HAVING SERIOUS IMPACT ON MALAWI AT THE MOMENT; MALAWI
HAD AMPLE RESERVES TO COPE WITH PRICE INCREASES. (BOTH IN
HIS SPEECH AT STATE BANQUET AND PRESS CONFERENCE SIR ALEC
EMPHASIZED BELIEF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WILL BE HIT VERY HARD
BY HIGH OIL PRICES. SEPTEL REPORTS BRITISH ASSESSMENT OF

EFFECTS OF OIL SHORTAGE WHICH UNDERLIES SIR ALEC'S STRONG STATEMENTS ON SUBJECT. HIGH COMMISSIONER IS DISTURBED THAT GOM APPARENTLY HAS FAILED SO FAR TO MAKE THOROUGH ANALYSIS OF IMPACT AND THAT PRESIDENT BANDA APPEARS UNAWARE OF POTENTIAL GRAVITY).

C. COMMUNISM: ASKED FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF WHAT COMMUNISTS WERE DOING IN THIS PART OF AFRICA PRESIDENT BANDA EXPRESSED HIS USUAL CONCERN. HE SAID ONES TO WATCH ARE CHINESE COMMUNISTS AS THEY OPERATE "INVISIBLY;"

D. DIEGO GARCIA: DURING DISCUSSION OF COMMUNISM SIR ALEC MENTIONED TO PRESIDENT PLANS TO EXPAND NAVAL FACILITY ASKING HIM TO KEEP MATTER CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL ANNOUNCEMENT. HE PLACED EXPANSION IN CONTEXT OF COMMUNIST BUILD-UP IN INDIAN OCEAN. PRESIDENT WAS DELIGHTED AND CALLED ATTENTION TO PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF APPROVAL MADE BY GOM IN 1970 AND 1971 AFTER FACILITY FIRST ESTABLISHED;

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RSC-01 CIEP-01 OMB-01 INT-01 TRSE-00 NEA-07 DODE-00

DRC-01 /074 W

----- 099694

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E. CONSULAR MATTERS: SIR ALEC REFERRED IN GENERAL TERMS TO PROBLEMS HIGH COMMISSION ENCOUNTERING ON RANGE OF CONSULAR MATTERS INCLUDING ACCESS TO BRITISH SUBJECTS AND EXPULSIONS FOR UNSPECIFIED REASONS. HE MENTIONED DIFFICULTIES WHICH WOULD BE CAUSED FOR HMG BY INCREASE IN EXODUS OF ASIANS FROM MALAWI. ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT SOME OF POINTS MADE, HE SEEMED WELL AWARE OF GENERAL NATURE OF PROBLEM AND MADE NO COMMITMENTS (HIGH COMMISSIONER HOPES PRESIDENT MAY IN FACT PASS WORD TO EASE UP ON CONSULAR MATTERS. UK HIGH COMMISSION IS EXERCISED OVER CONTINUED DIFFICULTIES IN PROVIDING NORMAL CONSULAR PROTECTION TO BRITISH SUBJECTS. THERE ARE IN MALAWI SOME 7-8,000 PERSONS "BELONGING TO BRITAIN" AND ADDITIONAL 11-12,000 ASIANS WITH BRITISH PASSPORTS. RATE OF EXPULSION OF ASIANS FOR UNSPECIFIED REASONS HAS GROWN.)

F. AID: CONTRARY TO BRITISH EXPECTATIONS PRESIDENT BANDA DID NOT RAISE ANY SUBJECT IN AID FIELD. BRITISH THOUGHT HE CONFIDENTIAL

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WOULD BRING UP ASSISTANCE FOR PARLIAMENT BUILDING IN NEW CAPITAL CITY AND FOR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT LILONGWE. IN RESPONSE TO MY INQUIRY, BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER SAID MILITARY AID OR ANY OTHER MILITARY MATTER NOT DISCUSSED;

G. VISIT TO UK: PRESIDENT BANDA AND SIR ALEC DISCUSSED IN GENERAL TERMS TRIP BY FORMER TO LONDON WITHOUT MENTION OF SPECIFIC DATES. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER BELIEVES PRESIDENT BANDA WOULD LIKE TO GO THIS SPRING BUT IS HESITANT BECAUSE OF "BOMBS" IN UK.

5. MEETING WITH UK BUSINESSMEN: SIR ALEC MET WITH LEADERS OF BRITISH BUSINESS COMMUNITY AT HIGH COMMISSION RECEPTION FEB 3. HE RECEIVED GLOOMY PICTURE OF ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR MALAWI AND OF FUTURE FOR BRITISH BUSINESSMEN HERE. THERE WAS STRONG CONCERN OVER SHORTAGES AND PRICE INCREASES RESULTING FROM WORLD PETROLEUM CRISIS AND FROM ATTACKS BY FRELIMO ON BEIRA-BLANTYRE RAILWAY. FOR EXAMPLE, GENERAL MANAGER OF LEVER BROTHERS SAID HIS FACTORY WOULD BE OBLIGED TO CLOSE WITHIN THREE DAYS IF SHIPMENTS NOT RECEIVED BECAUSE WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO MANUFACTURE.

6. BRITISH AID LEVEL: AT PRESS CONFERENCE, SIR ALEC SAID COSTS OF ENERGY CRISIS AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS WOULD HAVE IMPACT ON ABILITY OF UK AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO FURNISH ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING NATIONS. BRITAIN "HOPED" TO MAINTAIN ITS ASSISTANCE LEVELS BUT WOULD NEED TO SCRUTINIZE CAREFULLY EXISTING PROGRAMS AND ESPECIALLY FUTURE CAPITAL AID COMMITMENTS. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER COMMENTED REMARKS MEANT TO SIGNAL HMG'S "HOPE" IT COULD MAINTAIN

PRESENT NET AID LEVEL IN CONTRAST TO PAST PRACTICE OF STEADILY INCREASING AMOUNTS TO COPE WITH RISING COSTS. MALAWI COULD EXPECT NO GREATER SUMS THAN IN PAST WHICH WOULD MEAN LESS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED HIGH COMMISSIONER IS WORRIED OVER WHETHER FUNDS AVAILABLE WILL PROVE SUFFICIENT TO COMPLETE CAPITAL PROJECTS NOW UNDERWAY BECAUSE OF SHARP PRICE INCREASES ATTRIBUTABLE TO ENERGY SHORTAGE.

7. AT AIRPORT PRESS CONFERENCE SIR ALEC ASSERTED HE STOOD READY TO HELP IN ANY WAY HE COULD ON RHODESIA PROBLEM. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER COMMENTED REMARK MIGHT BE CONSTRUED CONFIDENTIAL

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AS NEW DEVELOPMENT BUT FONSEC HAD NOTHING SPECIFIC IN MIND ON SUBSTANCE OR TIMING. AT PRESS CONFERENCE SIR ALEC ALSO SAID THAT SOLUTION MUST BE CONSTRUCTED BY RHODESIANS FOR RHODESIANS. OUTSIDERS SHOULD LET RHODESIAN PEOPLE CHOOSE WHO NEGOTIATES FOR THEM. BISHOP MUZOREWA HAD JUST BEEN RE-ELECTED. IT WAS NOT FOR HIM OR ANYONE ELSE TO NOMINATE SPOKESMAN FOR RHODESIANS. LATTER COMMENT MADE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT ZAMBIAN FONMIN'S STATEMENT THAT BISHOP MUZOREWA NO LONGER REPRESENTATIVE OF RHODESIAN PEOPLE; THAT SITHOLE AND NKOMA MORE IMPORTANT. SIR ALEC DENIED HE HAD YET RECEIVED FROM ZAMBIANS HARD EVIDENCE OF PRESENCE SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS IN RHODESIA. BURDETT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, PETROLEUM, INFLATION, MILITARY BUILDUP, DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGES, BUSINESSMEN, VISITS, COMMUNISTS, TROOP CONCENTRATION, BANKRUPTCIES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BLANTY00186
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BLANTYRE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740250/aaaaburi.tel
Line Count: 253
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <02 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY SUMMARY: BRITISH DESCRIBE FOREIGN SECRETARY'S VISIT TO
TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, UK, MI, (ALEC)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005